

**State Board of Education  
February 19, 2008  
Item H-3**

**Department of Education  
Montpelier, Vermont**

**TEAM:** Independent and Federal Programs

**ITEM:** Will the State Board of Education issue the Albany College of Pharmacy a Certificate of Degree-Granting Authority to offer Doctor of Pharmacy degrees in Vermont for a period of five (5) years ending February 28, 2013 so long as the Albany College of Pharmacy satisfies the conditions, terms and limitations listed in the attached report?

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

**That the State Board of Education issue the Albany College of Pharmacy a Certificate of Degree-Granting Authority to offer Doctor of pharmacy degrees in Vermont for a period of five (5) years ending February 28, 2013 so long as the Albany College of Pharmacy satisfies the conditions, terms and limitations listed in the attached report.**

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY:** 16 VSA 176a

**BACKGROUND:**

The State Board is responsible for issuing Certificates of Degree-Granting Authority to an applicant whose goals, objectives, programs and resources are found to be adequate and appropriate for the stated purpose and for the protection of students and the public interest.

The Albany College of Pharmacy has applied for a Certificate of Degree-Granting Authority to offer Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.) degrees in Vermont.

The Vermont Higher Education Council review team recommends approval for a period of five (5) years. Reports from VHEC and IFP are attached.

**COST IMPLICATIONS:** \$ 2,100\*

**STAFF AVAILABLE:** Kerry Garber, Director  
Robert Lorenz, Postsecondary Approval Coordinator

\*Cost estimate includes notifying ACP of Board action, divesting portions of the application and storing key documents in Public Records, creating a monitoring schedule for conditions of approval to assure compliance, addressing questions and complaints over the five year approval period, and setting up a tickler file to alert ACP when an application for re-approval is due.

**Report to the State Board of Education  
Independent and Federal Workforce Team (IFP)**

Albany College of Pharmacy  
February 6, 2008

**Overview**

Descriptions in this report are drawn from the applicant's course catalog, application, correspondence sent to this agency and the site visit.

The Albany College of Pharmacy (ACP) has applied for a Certificate of Approval and for a Certificate of Degree-Granting Authority to offer Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.) degrees.

Because ACP proposes to offer degrees in Vermont, a Certificate of Degree-Granting Authority is required under Vermont's postsecondary statute. 16 VSA 176a (c) (3) requires each postsecondary school secure a Certificate of Degree-Granting Authority from the State before it confers or offers to confer a degree to a student enrolled in its Vermont school.

ACP submitted applications for a Certificate of Approval and a Certificate of Degree-Granting Authority in June 2007. The State Board issued a Certificate of Approval at its September 2007 meeting.

ACP's Vermont campus will offer a four-year Professional Entry Pharm.D. Program.

ACP has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Fletcher Allen Health Care (FAHC) involving space for faculty preceptors at FAHC, co-funding pharmacy practice faculty positions, designating FAHC staff as preceptors and giving priority to ACP students for clinical and experiential educational rotations.

**Criteria for Issuance of a Certificate of Approval**

**Statute** The State Board shall issue a certificate of approval to an applicant whose goals, objectives, programs and resources, including personnel, curriculum, finances and facilities are found to be adequate and appropriate for the stated purpose and for the protection of students and the public interest per 16 VSA § 176 (e).

**State Board Rules** To be issued a certificate of degree granting authority, a school shall show that it meets all of the criteria for issuance of a certificate of approval and in addition shall demonstrate that candidates for a degree shall be required to complete a coherent program of study per rule 2243.6.

**Resources 2243.5.1**

*The School shall demonstrate that it has adequate and appropriate resources, including personnel, curriculum, finances and facilities necessary to accomplish its stated purposes. All activities conducted by the school shall be consistent with its stated purpose.*

The Albany College of Pharmacy (ACP) mission includes improvement of health care by optimizing the benefits of existing drug and related health care practices and facilitates progressive adaptation to changing professional practice environments.

ACP is currently accredited by the American Council on Pharmaceutical Education, the Commission on Higher Education for the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools and the Commission of Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs.

### **Administrative Personnel:**

The Vermont Campus will include an Associate Dean, an Assistant Dean and an Administrative Assistant. The Associate Dean in Vermont will report to the Dean at the Albany campus.

Because ACP's Vermont program will admit applicants holding earned BS degrees or meeting requirements for prerequisite courses, the Vermont structure will include two departments, Pharmacy Practice and Pharmaceutical Science, each with a department chair.

### **Instructional Personnel:**

ACP plans to employ 10-15 FTE faculty for year 1 and approximately 40 FTE faculty at full implementation.

The CA Review Team found that the applicant's planned administrative and instructional personnel are adequate and appropriate for the stated purpose

### **Curriculum:**

The Albany College of Pharmacy (ACP) seeks approval from the State Board to offer a Professional Entry Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.) degree in Vermont.

ACP has provided a 4-year curriculum they intend to offer in Vermont. Applicants with a BS in a related field and/or certain prerequisites will be considered for application to this program.

ACP has adapted AACP's educational outcomes, including ability-based outcomes and professional practice-based outcomes. The program will require 145 – 150 credits.

ACP proposes to admit up to 75 students per class initially and up to 125 students per class upon full implementation.

The CA Review Team found the applicant's planned curriculum to be adequate and appropriate for the stated purpose.

### **Stability (2243.5.2)**

a) Sources of income: *The school shall have a plan for financing each proposed degree level or program. The plan shall specify the dollar amounts and proportions of income by source.*

The Albany College of Pharmacy (ACP) has submitted a pro-forma financial plan for its proposed Vermont campus. The plan shows an investment of \$688,500 for the 2007-2008

academic year with losses continuing until the 2011-2012 AY when annual expenses in the program reaches an estimated \$10 million level.

b) Financial Capability: *The school shall demonstrate in its financial plan that it will have sufficient funds to maintain operation and shall clearly document its ability to fulfill contractual obligations to students.*

ACP reports class sizes will be in the range of 50 – 75 in the initial implementation period and upon full implementation will be between 100 – 125 students.

ACP's CFO estimated tuition for the 2008-2009 academic year to be nearly \$30,000. ACP's will involve pre-existing housing opportunities for 200+ students, faculty and staff.

ACP's pro-forma financial statement for the 2008 – 2009 academic year estimates tuition and fees at \$2.2 million.

c) Management:

*The School operates under a governing structure which delineates responsibility for all legal operations. The school shall demonstrate sound business and financial management by showing evidence of an internal organization for the administration of its financial resources and a school budget planning process. In addition, the school shall maintain adequate financial records audited by an independent certified public accountant*

ACP provided audited financial statements for the year ending June 30, 2006 representing financial transactions of the Albany campus.

The CA Review Team found that the applicant demonstrates financial stability, capability and management structure that are adequate and appropriate for the stated purpose.

### **Disclosure (2243.5.3)**

*Information provided to prospective students shall not be false or misleading. The school shall be able to substantiate any claims regarding such matters as the likelihood of employment, graduate school admission or transfer of credit.*

The current Albany College of Pharmacy (ACP) catalog and student handbook provide information about the Albany campus required by State Board rules.

ACP includes its school closing policy and the credit transfer statement required by 16 VSA 176 (c) (1) (C) on its Enrollment Certification Form.

The CA Review Team found that information disclosed by the applicant to prospective students includes all information required by State Board rule and is not false or misleading.

#### **Facilities (2243.5.4)**

*The school's facilities shall meet all applicable state, federal and local fire, safety, health and access standards.*

ACP proposes to lease approximately 62,000 SF of classroom, office, laboratory and lecture space at Water Tower Hill in Colchester

Because the Water Tower Hill space is being renovated, ACP has not provided evidence that the proposed facilities in Colchester comply with the NFPA 101 Life Safety Code, 2003 Edition, as amended and the Vermont Fire & Building Safety Code 2005.

The IFP unit finds that facilities proposed for use in delivering ACP's Pharm.D. program are under negotiation and subject to a condition of approval prior to starting classes.

#### **Student Records (2243.5.5)**

*The school shall have adequate procedures for safe keeping of student records and complying with requirements of 16 VSA § 175.*

The Albany College of Pharmacy (ACP) complies with 16 VSA 176 (c) (1) (C) by having every student sign a form advising them that the transfer of credits from the Albany College of Pharmacy is only at the discretion of the receiving institution.

The CA Review Team found that the applicant has demonstrated adequate procedures for the safe keeping of student records.

#### **Certificate of Approval criteria (2243.6)**

*The school shall show that it meets all of the criteria for issuance of a certificate of approval and in addition shall demonstrate that candidates for a degree shall be required to complete a coherent program of study.*

Condition of Approval 16 VSA 176a (c) (4)

*Every postsecondary school shall meet any requirements for approval in its state of primary operations for the specific degree or credit-bearing program that it intends to offer in Vermont as a condition of approval to operate in Vermont.*

ACP meets requirements of 16 VSA 176 a (c) (4) by virtue of the Pharm. D. program being included on the December 2005 Inventory of Registered Degree and Certificate Programs issued by the NYSDE.

#### **Team Recommendations**

Having conducted a review of the Albany College of Pharmacy's application for a Certificate of Degree-Granting Authority to offer a four-year Pharm. D. degree per Title 16, V.S.A., § 176a (c) (3), the IFP Unit recommends that the Vermont State Board of Education issue the Albany

College of Pharmacy a Certificate of Degree-Granting Authority for a period of five (5) years ending February 28, 2013 subject to the following conditions, terms and limitations:

1. ACP shall notify each applicant for enrollment, in writing, on an application, enrollment or registration form to be signed by the applicant, that credits earned through ACP's programs are transferable only at the discretion of the receiving school.
2. ACP shall notify the State Board prior to making any substantive changes in or additions to educational programs described in its current certification application including engaging in any contractual arrangements with external organizations to teach credit-bearing courses.
3. At such time that ACP proposes to discontinue regular programs of instruction in Vermont, the school shall promptly notify the State Board.
4. Should ACP decide to offer new degree or certificate programs during this approval period, a new Certificate of Degree-Granting Authority or Certificate of Approval application will be necessary.
5. ACP agrees to include only earned and awarded degrees for faculty and administrators in its catalogs and student handbooks.
6. ACP will provide Vermont and Albany enrollment data to the Vermont Department of Education at the end of each academic year.
7. ACP shall provide the Department of Education with a certificate of occupancy for all facilities it intends to occupy in fulfillment of its activities in Vermont no later than July 31, 2008.
8. ACP shall provide a report from the UVM College of Medicine Dean's Office citing the involvement of UVM medical faculty in clinical educational experiences and involvement of medical library faculty in ACP educational programs no later than February 28, 2008.
9. ACP shall provide the Department of Education a copy of any and all memoranda of understanding or formal affiliation agreements made between ACP and UVM for the duration of the State Board's approval.

Failure of the school to meet any of the terms or conditions of approval may result in the initiation of regulatory suspension procedures associated with the Certificate of Degree-Granting Authority.